



New York & Long Island Field Offices

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Environmental Contaminants



Environmental Contaminants: Congressional Fact Sheet

"The most alarming of all man's assaults upon the environment is the contamination of air, earth, rivers, and sea with dangerous and even lethal materials."

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

Environmental contamination is one of America's greatest concerns. Annually, approximately 136 million pounds of toxic chemicals are discharged into the Nation's waterways, while 4 billion pounds of pesticides are applied to the land. Fish and wildlife often signal environmental contamination unnoticed by any other means – fish kills, deformities in birds and fish, and failed reproduction. The New York Field Office's (NYFO) environmental contaminants program responds to the threats contamination poses to fish and wildlife. NYFO Biologists are responsible for natural resource damage assessment and restoration, hazardous spill response, and technical assistance to State and Federal agencies, National Wildlife Refuges, and citizens with concerns regarding contamination of our fish and wildlife.

Damage Assessment and Restoration Program (NRDAR)

The Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) Program is designed to restore natural resources that have been impacted by releases of hazardous substances or oil spills. Several laws provide the foundation for NRDAR, giving natural resource Trustees the legal authority to have those responsible for harm to natural resources pay to restore those resources. Natural resource Trustees include Federal and State agencies and Indian Tribes that have the responsibility and authority to protect natural resources.

Ongoing Damage Assessments

St. Lawrence Cooperative NRDA

- Significant injury to natural resources from PCBs, PAHs, fluoride in three rivers (Grasse, St. Lawrence, Raquette).
- Shared trusteeship with the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, State of New York, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; we work in cooperation with ALCOA and General Motors.
- Injuries to ecological resources such as fish and birds; impacts to cultural and recreational use of natural resources.



Hudson River NRDA

- One of the most PCB-contaminated ecosystems in the country.
- Significant fish and avian resources.
- Shared trusteeship with State of New York and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



Ongoing or Planned Restoration

Final restoration was completed by the Trustees in 2004 in accordance with the [Applied Environmental Services](#) Site Restoration Plan.

The Final Restoration Plan for the \$1.3 million [Love Canal, Forest Glen, 102nd Street Sites](#) was completed in 2005; restoration includes grassland and oak savannah restoration, wetland restoration, fisheries enhancement, and common tern nesting habitat restoration.

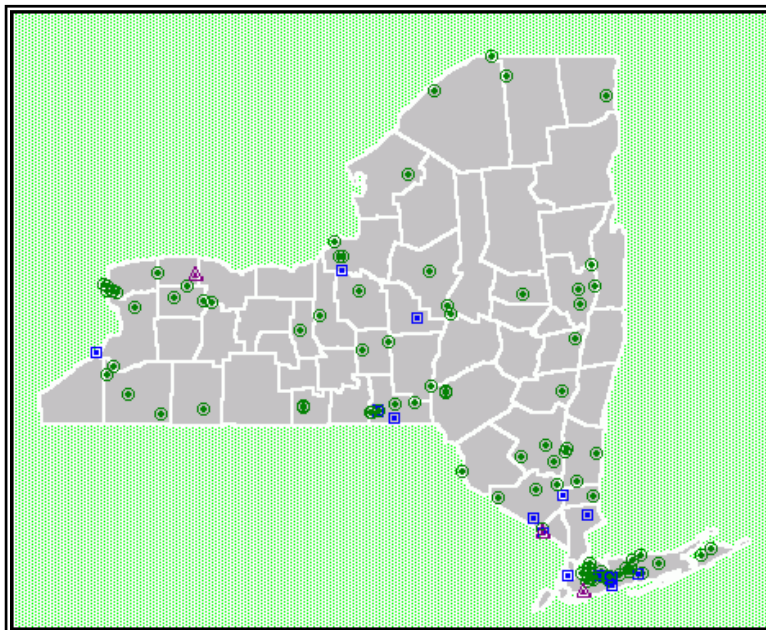
- Restoration Planning is underway for the [Cortese Landfill Site](#) (\$75,000 for wetland restoration) and [Mattiace Petrochemical Site](#) (\$150,000 for tidal marsh restoration).
- [Liberty Industrial Site](#) settlement imminent (fish passage being considered by responsible parties to restore access to 30 acres of open water/wetland habitat).
- [Wide Beach](#) restoration planning on-going, contingent on Memorandum of Agreement with Seneca Nation.



Biological Technical Assistance Group

NYFO provides a full-time Biologist to assist USEPA in their evaluation of the effects of Superfund sites and related remedial activities on fish and wildlife. We have made significant progress this past year ensuring protective remedies at sites such as [Onondaga Lake](#), [Griffiss Air Force Base](#), [Richardson Landfill](#), and the [Grasse River](#).

Federal Superfund Sites



Map Key: Proposed: 3 Final: 90 Deleted: 16

Other Contaminants Activities

NYFO performs pre-acquisition surveys and special studies for our wildlife refuges. [The Martens Site Pre-acquisition Survey](#) was recently completed on a 1,000 acre parcel being considered for acquisition at Montezuma NWR. Contaminant issues exist due to historic use of organochlorine and metal-based pesticides.



[Mosquito spraying of thousands of acres at Cicero Swamp](#) (pyrethroid-based pesticides) evaluated with respect to effects on amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish, and mammals.

The NYFO is engaged in informal [Section 7 consultation with the USEPA regarding the New York State water quality standards](#). The Service has concurred that the proposed standards for mercury, PCBs, DDT, and dioxin are not likely to adversely affect the Federally-listed bog turtle. The proposed standards for certain metals are likely to adversely affect the Federally-listed dwarf wedge mussel, clubshell, and candidate rayed bean. We are consulting with the USEPA and State in an evaluation of measures needed to ensure that water quality standards or implementation procedures are modified to avoid adverse impacts.

